

U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12TX8

School Type (Public Schools): ☐ Charter ☒ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Mr. Danny Henderson

Official School Name: Blue Ridge High School

School Mailing Address: 11020 County Road 504
 Blue Ridge, TX 75424-0008

County: Collin County State School Code Number*: 043917001

Telephone: (972) 752-5554 E-mail: todd.lintzen@brisd.net

Fax: (972) 752-9084 Web site/URL: http://www.brisd.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Todd Lintzen Superintendent e-mail: todd.lintzen@brisd.net

District Name: Blue Ridge ISD District Phone: (972) 752-5554

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Stacie Durham

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12TX8

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12TX8

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
(per district designation): 1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
3 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 11244

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Rural
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	0	0	0
K	0	0	0		7	0	0	0
1	0	0	0		8	0	0	0
2	0	0	0		9	22	18	40
3	0	0	0		10	26	27	53
4	0	0	0		11	28	23	51
5	0	0	0		12	19	12	31
Total in Applying School:								175

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
0 % Black or African American
13 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
86 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 14%
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	14
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	10
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	24
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	175
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.14
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	14

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 4%
 Total number of ELL students in the school: 6
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1
 Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 49%

Total number of students who qualify: 85

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 16%

Total number of students served: 28

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>6</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>22</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>32</u>	<u>0</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 11:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	97%	100%	96%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	<u>33</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>14%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>38%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>1%</u>
Found employment	<u>31%</u>
Military service	<u>0%</u>
Other	<u>16%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☒ No

☐ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

Blue Ridge High School (BRHS) students are a focal point for the Blue Ridge community. The high school is located within Collin County's rural northeast corner and has experienced a remarkable transformation in instruction, facilities, and parental involvement. In 2006, BRHS received an Academically Unacceptable rating from the state's governing Texas Education Agency (TEA), which caused students, parents, community members, and the staff to lose faith and trust in their school. During this time many students did not value their high school nor did they trust the school employees who seemingly worked at Blue Ridge as a springboard for other teaching employment. Parents and the community were disenfranchised with the high school. Knowing this, the high school's direction changed to focus on educating students with higher expectations. BRHS's goals are providing high quality academic programs for all students, providing a curriculum preparing students for 21st century employment skills, collaborating and communicating with the parents and community, providing a professional instructional staff to meet the needs of all students, and increasing the student leadership at the high school campus.

The transformation process which began in 2006 continues today. School leadership continues to analyze, communicate, and ensure the direction of excellence happens within and outside of the classroom. Teachers strive to develop student connections which build trust and respect. The "All In" approach includes every staff member from bus drivers and cafeteria workers, to secretaries and aides, to teachers and administrators. BRHS employees are equal team members where each person is responsible for the continued success of our students. Placing value on each individual member our school has increased school spirit and created a climate of excellence in all we do. BRHS staff realizes a positive attitude is contagious. This begins with the bus ride to school, and continues throughout the day as students travel from classroom to classroom. It is vital for BRHS students to know they are loved and valued. We respect them as students who contribute positively to our campus as we prepare them to have a successful impact on the world.

BRHS teachers make huge sacrifices of personal time as they are involved in all areas of student life including concession stands and fundraisers, prom, training and coaching events, sponsoring clubs and classes, and attending games or other activities to show student support. Such a personal commitment to BRHS students nurtures a lasting relationship with students and the community, which leads to a sense of ownership and a willingness to stay with our campus to continually support and build students as they are challenged to succeed. The lasting bonds created have been the driving force behind our incredible improvements in student achievement in a short period of time. These changes have come in spite of increases in state and federal accountability and an increase in the number of our students designated as economically disadvantaged. Teachers convey a positive, "can do" attitude that students have come to expect. The career as "teacher" has become so much more than just a job or a paycheck at BRHS. Our teachers realize their opportunity to change lives, one student at a time.

Traditions run deep at BRHS where our community celebrates an annual Homecoming Week, culminating with a game-day, district-wide parade involving parents, community leaders, and many volunteers. Another tradition, Saturday Night in Blue Ridge is an event that provides games, food, and fellowship to celebrate community pride. Our community also has an active youth sports league that trains students at an early age to appreciate teamwork and cooperation through organized sports. A Christmas on the Square event also involves high school students and collaborates with local churches for a Parade of Lights, a unique night-time Christmas parade.

Students participate in a wide variety of academic, athletic, and extra-curricular activities. 84% of the student population participates in at least one activity; 54% participate in two to three activities, and 36% participate in more than four activities. At least 25% of our students participate in University

Interscholastic League (UIL) Academics, many of whom study extensively for these academic contests and competitions. The Blue Ridge staff feels student engagement and academic successes increase when students are "All In" and actively make the school a better place.

Milestones during Blue Ridge High's transformation include transitioning from a 2005-2006 Texas Education Performance Rating of "Academically Unacceptable" (the worst rating) to a 2009-2010 "Exemplary" (the best rating) in four school years. The improvement in academics fostered an improvement in students' morale and self-esteem, which was directly noted in athletics when in 2009 BRHS produced its first state champion in school history with a power lifter who went on to win national and world titles. Our softball team finished second in the 2010 State Tournament, then in 2011, the baseball team finished second in their State Tournament.

Our academic and athletic accomplishments led to Blue Ridge High School being named a 2010 Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex Top Five High School, a 2011 Top 10 High School in the State of Texas, and now a Blue Ribbon Award Nominee.

1. Assessment Results:

A. All Texas campuses are rated on one of the four levels:

- **Exemplary** (90% of students meet standard for each subject, and 25% meet Commended Performance standard for Reading/ELA and Mathematics)
- **Recognized** (80% of students meet standard in all subjects and 15% meet Commended Performance standard for Reading/ELA and Mathematics)
- **Academically Acceptable** (70% meet standard for Reading/ELA, Writing, and Social Studies; 65% for Mathematics, and 60% for Science)
- **Academically Unacceptable** (Fails to meet Academically Acceptable requirements)

All Texas students are awarded one of the three categories for student performance:

- **Commended** (Student performed at a level considerably above the state passing standard.)
- **Met Standard** (Student performed at a level at or somewhat above the state passing standard.)
- **Did Not Meet Standard** (Student performed at a level below the state passing standard.)

Although state and federal standards continue to rise and there has been a significant increase in the population of our economically disadvantaged students, Blue Ridge High school is currently rated by TEA as a Recognized campus. Over the past five years, student expectations at BRHS have improved from just meeting state assessment minimum standards to increased commended performance in all testing area. From 2006 to 2011, the student passing rate on all state assessments increased from 47% meeting standards to 91% meeting standards, with some academic levels achieving 100%. During this time frame, our commended scores rose to an average of 28%. This significant improvement is a direct reflection of changes in the campus climate from the attitude of “just getting by” to striving for Exemplary status. More importantly, the percentage of students attending post-secondary education courses (four-year college, junior college, professional training courses) has increased significantly from less than 20% to over 50%. During this five-year period, testing scores continued to increase, and so did student expectations, not only on state assessments, but also in all areas of classroom performance. As a result, there have been dramatic improvements in the number of students reaching commended performance on multiple tests. These increases have been across-the-board improvements, including our only subgroup - economically disadvantaged. Students' state assessments and benchmark scores continue to be closely monitored and tracked to continue trends of academic success.

We expect all students to master their state assessments, and we celebrate students' successes, especially students who struggle to obtain passing scores. We encourage students, regardless of testing levels, to achieve “commended levels” in their testing scores. Realizing testing scores are an indicator for college and career readiness, we desire students to do their personal best, and the BRHS staff celebrates with students when they make improvements, no matter how small.

Through implementation of new state standards in English Language Arts and Math, cross-curricular teaching, and professional development for application of the new state College and Career Readiness standards, and a model of continuous assessment by benchmark data, a focus on improvement in student engagement in classroom instruction and delivery has been established, which seeks to enable every student to be successful at his or her highest level. High expectations for student performance are matched equally with expectations for quality instruction and administrative support.

B. Performance trends are shown in the data tables and graphs placed into Part VI of this application. State assessment results show a noteworthy increase from 2003 to 2011. A rise from 28% to 91% “Met Standard” and “Commended” combined scores revealed a remarkable 63% campus improvement overall, while the average state increase for the same period improved by 29%. Our commended levels rose from 2003 with 0.0% commended to 14% commended school wide in 2011. This increase came at a time when the campus utilized more rigorous assessment tools while the level for proficient and advanced scores rose. The Mathematics scores showed the most remarkable increases, as overall proficient & advanced scores rose from 52% of students in 2006 to 96% in 2011, with a 52% increase over 2003 scores (average state increase was 27%). The Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) data indicates scores for the same period did not have as large a rise, in part because they were already in the 90% range in 2006. Yet 99% of all students had a proficient or advanced score in 2011, a remarkable increase of 41% since 2003 compared with the statewide average increase of 18%. From 2006-2007 to 2010-2011, the Advanced ELA scores have risen 18%, with an increase of Advanced ELA scores for students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals of 19% for the same time period. This indicates that the level of instruction for all students was increased, not just the students with familial advantages. Similar increases are noted in assessment data for Mathematics, and all sub-populations rose at similar rates. Currently, all sub-group scores are within 10% of this high proficient and advanced score, with the exception of 9th grade mathematics students in special education because of the small number of students in this group. As with all students who do not meet standards, individualized remediation is made available, following school-wide guidelines explained below.

A combination of factors led to these remarkable increases. A 2007 administration change started the rebuilding process to earn back community trust for the school. Ending a “revolving door” of faculty turnover was an important administrative achievement. Students were assessed at least twice a year within their instructional programs for progress prior to the state assessment, and this data was used to target individualized instruction for particular standards. Many students were double-blocked into two math classes, and other students not in need of intensive remediation received small group tutorials during select elective classes or participated in after-school tutorials. Technology upgrades to enhance teaching methods were implemented, including video projectors, smart boards, new graphing calculators and laptop computers. The C-Scope curriculum was adopted to align curriculum to state standards and the baseline curriculum tested learner objectives. Rewards (t-shirts, etc.) were offered to students who showed improvement in these tutorials, and student expectations transformed from, “I hope I can pass,” to “I think I can achieve a commended score!” It was this latter change in attitude that began to permeate the whole campus. Student confidence rose, engagement in classes increased, disciplinary problems lessened and the whole school culture transformed from a negative atmosphere to an inspired one. School became a place to learn, to explore, and to ask important life questions. Blue Ridge is by no means a perfect school, but it is a markedly different learning environment than what it was just a few years ago.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Blue Ridge teachers use assessment data numerous ways to track student progress, improve overall classroom instruction, intervene for specific student remediation, and reward student success. Teachers have access to data-tracking software, such as Eduphoria, to analyze and individualize student achievement and instruction. Each classroom teacher has access to student data in all areas, and teachers can see students’ earlier testing results from 3-12. Data include common assessments in all core areas, standardized assessments in all core areas, and contains socioeconomic information. Eduphoria also provides a portal for tracking student progress toward meeting graduation requirements, future goals, and

sharing information about students between teachers, such as individual strengths and weaknesses. The ability to share such vast information enables teachers at BRHS to give students more individualized instruction, and helps to build and maintain student-teacher relationships.

Students who did not meet passing standards or falling within a sub-group are placed in learning labs to provide specific-area remediation where hands-on lessons and individualized instruction are the focus. These students also have access to MySatori, an online program that provides individualized, engaging Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) practice and preparation with tangible rewards for students as they master key concepts and skills. This tutoring is especially helpful for Special Education (SpED) and English Language Learners (ELL) students who may need close monitoring to ensure student success.

Teachers at BRHS are flexible in planning and preparing lessons and activities. Access to data allows teachers the opportunity to make necessary changes to create individualized, focused lessons for groups of students, and to improve the delivery of information to increase retention and spiral this knowledge into future lessons. Access to data across the curriculum also allows teachers to monitor student achievement in other subjects. For example, the science teacher can see that students in math class are having trouble with a specific concept. Being able to track all student progress gives the science teacher information and the chance to enhance that concept in the classroom.

Communication and transparency are key components of our success at BRHS. A school-wide report card to publicize state performance data is sent home with students, discussed at school board and other local meetings, placed in the district and campus improvement plans, and placed on the BRHS web site. School officials share information about the status of our school, and are willing to discuss and take input about intervention strategies from the community. BRHS staff takes pride in maintaining a high level of community involvement and communication, and the staff organically discusses positive school accomplishments within the town. Facebook and Twitter are also useful, proven tools for communicating information to the community.

Individual students' academic progress is discussed personally, and parents are provided with progress notices, report cards, assessment reports, and parents have real-time access to academic progress and attendance data through the on-line Parent Portal system.

In preparing for college, BRHS students participate in other assessments including the PSAT (9-10th grade), SAT, ACT, TSI, THEA, and ASVAB. Many students also complete dual-credit courses and begin college preparation as sophomores and juniors. Information about test preparation and college readiness is available during meetings, in handouts, and on-line through the school web site. Tracking student progress in the classroom helps preparing students for the variety of testing situations, and in determining college readiness.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Blue Ridge provides quality professional development for teachers and administrators who then share their learned knowledge district-wide, within schools, grade-levels, and other professional associations.

Within the district, teachers support each other with technology training, offering courses such as Mimio whiteboard, class-wide laptops, Web 2.0, Wiki/blog training, website training. Since teachers use C-Scope as a curriculum framework, teachers also train for vertical-alignment, Professional Learning Communities, and improving student-to-teacher relationships. In addition, teachers infuse classroom instruction with technology through our Technology District Committee, which contains administration, faculty, and teaching staff who make collaborative decisions that affect the technology purchased for instructional use.

Outside our district, BRHS has teachers who plan and collaborate with teachers at other schools within

their same subject areas who share best instructional strategies between schools. Teachers also work with the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Academics (to share best-practices with other schools in our UIL Academic district).

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

With approximately 180 students, the small school structure allows parents, students and faculty to interact extensively over a period of years, building personal relationships which foster academic success.

The parental and community support of BRHS administrators, teachers and students is an important facet of the school's improvement and success. One of the most important strategies is to enhance communication between parents, students, teachers and administrators. In addition to the ubiquitous beginning-of-the-year school open house, the faculty pursues a high-level of communication with parents through multiple modalities. Teachers maintain websites that contain current lesson plans and assignments, as well as using Facebook, Twitter and e-mail to maintain contact with parents and students.

Through the online Parent Portal, parents can electronically receive regular updates on student academic progress, including e-mail notification of grades below a set threshold. The school hosts numerous programs for parents and students outside school hours, including scholarship and college prep workshops, ACT/SAT information nights, FFA events, awards assemblies, Beta Club induction ceremonies, District Planning Committee, Student Support Committee, Parent-Teacher Organization and participation in National Parental Involvement Day and Parent Appreciation nights.

A key component of this increased level of communication between families and the school is the Student-Advisory Program. At the school year's beginning, teachers choose individual students based on like-minded interests and personalities for their Advisory Teams. Each advisor is available to assist small groups of students with school and personal issues, celebrate milestones, and prepare for tests and post-graduation plans, and serving as a main contact point for parents. Advisors meet with students once a week to discuss progress in school, pass out report cards, and continue to nurture a caring, supportive relationship with the students as individuals and as a group. The school counselor offers additional time to combine groups of students for Divorce Care, giving students an outlet for concerns, questions, and problems in dealing with divorced parents.

Rachel's Challenge is a school implemented, student-led friendship program that reaches out into the community to encourage moral responsibility and kind treatment of others. This program has had an enormous impact on school climate, and has helped increase self-esteem and compassion of students, families, and staff at BRHS. This program offers activities that are designed and planned by students mainly during enrichment time. Students are responsible for maintaining this program, and they frequently offer thank you cards and treats for school and community members, recognize and welcome new students to campus, foster a climate of doing good deeds for others (and build paper links on a chain to represent each deed), and offer support and encouragement to students who are struggling with different issues. Rachel's Challenge is a great deterrent for bullying, and has helped everyone become more aware of the impact they have on others.

Parents and community members play a large role in fashioning the BRHS culture. The school benefits from outside organizations who advertise at various sporting events, while the school offers public dramatic, art and musical performances in addition to athletic events. Through involvement in fundraisers, running concession stands at athletic events, participation in booster clubs for the band and athletics, or serving on the District Improvement Plan Committee, these committed adults volunteer their time to foster a spirit of cooperation, inclusion, and success.

1. Curriculum:

BRHS students are required to obtain four-year mastery of math, science, social studies, and English Language Arts courses. In addition to our core curriculum, students also take a combination of Economics, Physical Education, Fine Arts, Speech and additional elective courses. Students need a minimum of twenty-six credits to graduate with either the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement Diplomas.

Blue Ridge High School's foundational curriculum is C-Scope, vertically aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), in the four core subject areas. The curriculum includes: English I-IV; Science courses of Biology, Integrated Physics and Chemistry, Chemistry, Environmental Science, and Physics; Mathematics courses of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; and Social Studies courses of World Geography, World History, US History, and Government/Economics.

While C-Scope provides a strong foundation and a consistent year-to-year scope and sequence, aligned with Texas state standards, teachers are encouraged to enrich and supplement C-Scope lessons using their own best practices and real-life experiences. In developing curriculum for honors-level courses, teachers are required to include the scope and sequence for TEKS, while greatly increasing expectations for classroom performance based on the rigor of lessons and innovative classroom activities to ensure college readiness, and meet the intellectual needs of high-level thinkers. These teachers have a Gifted-and-Talented (GT) certificate and are deemed Highly Qualified in their subject areas. As a result, BRHS offers honors-level courses in the four core areas of English I-II, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, World Geography, and World History. Dual-Credit college-level courses are currently provided through Collin County College for the equivalent courses for English III, English IV, US History, Government, College Algebra and Economics.

Spanish I-III is offered at BRHS, and students interested in other foreign languages may take these classes as correspondence courses.

Students are given career preparation opportunities through BRHS's Career and Technology Education, which includes Agricultural, Food and Natural Resources, Business Management, and Finance courses. Many students take advantage of these programs because they have a strong desire to be a positive influence in their school, community and in their own lives. The students see the practical application of these courses because of their life experience in a rural, predominately agricultural town.

BRHS offers several fine arts strands, including Band I-IV, Art I-IV, Theatre I-II, and Dance I-II.

While BRHS offers Physical Education courses, the majority of our students participate in athletics. Health courses are offered, and within the science curriculum nutrition and health are taught.

Students who demonstrate college readiness through TAKS scores or who meet college entrance requirements are also given the opportunity to take college courses through our dual credit program. Juniors and seniors can choose to take English III and IV, US History, Government and Economics for dual credit in high school and college. College Algebra and Trigonometry are offered for our seniors. With prior principal approval, sophomore students may take Psychology, Sociology and other electives. Blue Ridge consistently has over 50% of our students continue on to post-secondary education with many others continuing their education in vocational areas.

BRHS students are also exposed to University Interscholastic League (UIL) academic contest preparation through three-week rotating block sections given during advisory classes in the afternoon. Students are given the opportunity to attend UIL contests throughout the year. Teachers encourage students to incorporate academic skills learned in UIL enrichment time into their regular classes. For example, math teachers refer to shortcuts learned in number sense. Increased opportunities in UIL events have helped direct students toward academic success.

In addition to our Texas curriculum requirements, BRHS students are involved in many elective-based activities ranging from Future Farmers of America (FFA) agricultural showing and judging contests, UIL academic contests, One-Act Play, band, athletics, and organizations such as Beta Club and Science Club. All of these activities provide a solid foundation for community cooperation and involvement.

BRHS offers a wide variety of activities for students. With such a streamlined staff, teachers are coaches, club sponsors, and mentors to many students. Having a large number of activities represented by a small student body has resulted in a strong sense of teamwork between teachers and students. This feeling of pride and dedication to excellence echoes through the hallways of BRHS, and this small community. As the closing line of our school's Alma Mater reads, "In halls of fame, we'll write your name, BRHS."

2. Reading/English:

Based on the study of language and literature, English I, II, III, and IV grade-level, honors, and dual-credit courses investigate literature and non-fiction, poetry, research, writing, and listening and speaking. Students are also highly encouraged to research cross-curricular topics and work in collaboration. As students advance from English I upward, the courses increasingly ask students to think like a writer and analyze between the use of literary language and other forms of discourse. Teaching the courses thematically allows students to synthesize different course matter to make text-to-self, text-to-world, and text-to-text connections. Students are also able to bridge connections between English and their other courses through cross-collaboration with teachers and team teaching.

The courses also emphasize oral and written expression with writing, reading and listening and speaking and students practice these skills within group settings and within whole-class activities. The purpose of the English courses is to provide students a safe environment to learn about real life issues, the human condition, and to discover and engage in their world. Tolerance and open-mindedness are encouraged and students learn to validate others while engaging in discussions and other forms of expression. Students are highly encouraged to engage in (individually and within groups) inquiry-based project learning and reflect on their outcomes.

Teachers ask under-achieving students and reluctant learners to enrich their classroom reading, with additional independent novel reading or student-selected materials, and students receive rewards and prizes for reading independently. Since 2009, students have had an optional, but highly encouraged Summer Reading Assignment to read at least two books, and students are rewarded during the school year for finishing.

Technology is extensively used within the ELA classroom for reading, writing, and group collaboration. A department-wide Wiki is used to facilitate students' instruction, group work, and project-based learning. The Wiki also allows peer-to-peer feedbacks, student-to-teacher feedback and dialogue about assignments and real-time questions students have about their learning. In addition, the use of laptops for construction of writing allows easy and timely feedback between student peers and teachers to students. Each classroom is equipped with a projector, interactive whiteboard, and teachers have access to webcams, digital camera, Classroom Performance System (CPS) hardware and extensive Web 2.0 tools to publish students' work to authentic audiences.

3. Mathematics:

Blue Ridge High School offers the following math courses: Math Models, Agricultural Math Applications, Statistics and Risk Management, Algebra I, Algebra I Honors, Geometry, Geometry Honors, Algebra II, Algebra II Honors, and Pre-Calculus Honors, as well as dual-credit College Algebra. In 2011, 96% of BRHS students passed their state-mandated math assessment, including all but 1 of the students taking their “exit-level” exam as juniors. This success came from a number of changes and improvements over a period of years to establish “best practices” in mathematics instruction.

Students who have not successfully mastered state assessment objectives, local benchmark exams, or show poor in-classroom performance are double-blocked into a second math class or math lab, where current course objectives are re-taught with additional time for supervised practice. Teachers adapt the C-Scope curriculum for engaging classroom instruction, yet retain the C-Scope provided vertical alignment, scope and sequence. While using additional technology purchased for their classroom to enhance instruction and engagement (including video projectors, electronic whiteboards, document cameras, and new graphing calculators), teachers make data-driven decisions, to fill their curriculum with real-world applications and show students how math is vital to their lives. Non-math teachers give math related warm-ups in their classrooms and engage in cross-curricular instruction.

In the Spring Semester, some students not enrolled in a math lab class but showing potential for outstanding performance are selected for additional individualized instruction.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Within the science curriculum, Blue Ridge has doubled the percentage of students who met the state standards in the past five years. Since the 2009-2010 school year, nearly 99% of BRHS students passed the science assessment. Many strategies have been employed in order to accomplish this goal.

The science teachers and school counselor first began cultivating student confidence in themselves and individual abilities. Student morale was low because many had never passed the state assessment, largely due to a high teacher turnover in previous years and inconsistent instruction. The staff has stabilized in recent years, investing time in encouraging and instilling self-confidence in all students. Strategies have include individual counseling, group counseling, and balloon releases to symbolize the release of fears and other negative thoughts regarding their success in science. We believe the trust built through establishing strong teacher-student relationships has been invaluable in increasing student achievement.

The science teachers have made a commitment to implementing high learning standards in all science courses, and have followed the TEKS as a guide. Initially, student gaps in understanding were evident in many content areas, so teachers developed remedial lessons bridging gaps before teaching new concepts. Benchmark tests were administered several times a year in order to identify struggling students and deficiencies. Remediation classes were structured into the schedule for identified students. In addition, staff in all content areas began reviewing science vocabulary during class warm-ups to increase knowledge and retention of new vocabulary. Students have the opportunity to participate in TAKS “Academy” the weeks prior to the TAKS test that involves intensive review of all objectives covered.

In order to meet the individualized needs of students within diverse classes, teachers present content in a variety of ways. Students are engaged in hands-on laboratory activities 40% of the time. In addition, students often employ manipulatives to construct and analyze difficult concepts. At-risk students are assisted with differentiated instruction based on their specific needs and skills. Teachers strive to incorporate real-world applications into all areas, and encourage students to examine and discuss the relevance of science topics in their lives. The staff also endeavors to teach across the curriculum. For example, math and science teachers collaborate to teach vectors during the same six weeks. Students utilize technology in the science classrooms as well, conducting research and creating products, using technology in the lab to measure variables, and participating in virtual labs.

5. Instructional Methods:

Blue Ridge High School has an eclectic mix of teachers, from different backgrounds and experience levels, who are creative in bringing a variety of resources into the classroom. Teachers begin each class with bell ringers or warm-ups to engage students, followed by lessons that incorporate real-world issues, current trends in science and technology, or discussions that are meaningful to the students and provide a chance to be responsible for individualized learning. With a small student to teacher ratio, teachers know each student very well, and typically have the same students for multiple years in different classes. BRHS teachers have a talent for creating lessons that are meaningful and engage the student at the student's interest and level of prior knowledge. BRHS teachers provide student-centered, hands-on, innovative lessons, allowing students to learn using their best learning styles, varying instruction and assessment (projects), put learning in the hands of the student and giving each student the responsibility for the learning process.

In addition to specified intervention strategies and modifications in place by a student's IEP, teachers also provide additional instructional resources based on student need in that subject area. Students who are low performing in an area are given specific intervention strategies outside the classroom such as tutorials, and can be placed into a tutorial class where instruction includes hands-on activities as well as computer based programs to help the student reach individual goals. BRHS also provides peer-tutoring for students.

To reach the top performing students, BRHS offers honors courses (grades 9-12) and dual-credit courses (grades 10-12). Instructional methods for these courses are diversified as well, and focus on college-readiness, career choices, and leadership skills. Field trips are offered to nurture an appreciation for art and culture, and to bring enriching experiences to students who might otherwise have the opportunity such as trips to museums or the zoo.

Teachers periodically team up to provide cross-curricular projects that include several learning areas. Projects provide alternative assessments and enrichment opportunities for students. Products are technology based and shared on the web, or students create posters to hang in the hallway. This provides another opportunity for peers to share in the knowledge from other classrooms and lessons.

BRHS teachers incorporate technology across the curriculum to provide interactive web-based learning adventures, providing students with the resources to create products that can be shared on-line. Students have access to iTouch devices, CPS, Mimio smart boards, On-Line Expert, and school resources (on-line lessons, assignments, etc.). This variety of technology allows all students the opportunity for differentiated learning which is student-led and puts the responsibility in the hands of the student. Students are allowed to be creative, and prepare for real-world application of knowledge.

6. Professional Development:

Blue Ridge High School designs professional development around student achievement, making data driven decisions. Teachers attend professional development in their core subject areas, ELPS training and vocabulary enhancement, technology training, under resourced education, curriculum enhancement, and teachers are encouraged to join cadres and create groups of professional educators. Teachers attend course content trainings and conferences in district, through Region Service Centers, and National Conferences.

Professional development includes differentiated instruction, inclusion, 5 E Model, and vocabulary strategies. Teachers participate in trainings and activities designed to help the teacher connect with the student as an individual. The Blue Ridge staff has access to computer based programs that provide immediate access to student common assessment scores, benchmarks, and all records of previous standardized tests.

Blue Ridge administration encourages teachers to attend conferences that promote student-centered learning, differentiated instruction, building relationships, targeting at-risk students, and updates in each

teaching field. The conferences are designed to create engaging student lessons and referenced under achieving students. The teachers return from the conferences and lead campus professional development to share good practices and share real life application examples.

Student achievement and classroom improvement is the core of all professional development. Teachers synthesize course content and training to provide students with best-in-class instruction.

Blue Ridge High School was spotlighted as a panelist at the District Awards for Teacher Excellence (DATE) Conference in 2010.

7. School Leadership:

The Blue Ridge leadership philosophy encourages collaboration and ownership by the staff. One of the roles assumed by the principal is that of facilitator by allowing teachers freedom to enhance their curriculum as they deem necessary. Part of this process includes giving the teachers ample opportunities to meet within their respective subjects. However, cross-curricular planning is highly encouraged and practiced daily by the staff.

Using this approach, our school has made tremendous progress in the last six years. Teachers are now viewed as professionals and are considered instructional experts and campus leaders. The administration understands that for the students to be successful, the staff must feel they are part of the team and a professional asset.

The development of new goals for students was part of the restructuring process. The goals set forth tackle issues we have had; such as lack of technology, training for the staff, and curriculum to meet college readiness standards. Since these goals have been set, some of the technology improvements have been to add Epson projectors to all classrooms. iTouch devices and laptop computer carts have been added for classroom use to enhance student learning and provide a 21st Century learning experience. In the classroom, teachers have a base curriculum that they enhance with real-world experiences in order to achieve the greatest level of mastery. BRHS offers advanced courses such as honors classes and dual credit courses, which allows many graduating students to finish high school with up to twenty-four college hours.

Thanks to a strong collaborative process, BRHS is a thriving and successful. We are positioned for continued success that will allow teachers and students to thrive. We realize though that success is not a destination; we are on a journey of continuous improvement. While we are happy about our recent successes, we continue to plan and improve the Blue Ridge campus. There was a time in the past where our school was a community disappointment; however, that has changed. At Blue Ridge High School, now and in the future, we are “ALL IN.”

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 10 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Administration Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	92	90	54	66	61
Commended	21	16	3	23	5
Number of students tested	53	49	37	44	41
Percent of total students tested	98	92	90	94	89
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	4	3	3	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	8	7	6	11
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	96	95	59	46	50
Commended	8	5	0	8	8
Number of students tested	25	19	17	13	12
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested		1	1	1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	7	8	2	3	5
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	1	5	7	5	6
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	2	1	1	1	1
6. White					
Met Standard/Commended	91	90	56	67	62
Commended	20	18	3	23	6
Number of students tested	46	39	34	39	34
NOTES:					

12TX8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 10 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Administration Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	96	96	78	100	71
Commended	22	18	5	14	0
Number of students tested	54	51	37	44	42
Percent of total students tested	100	96	93	94	91
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	2	2	3	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	4	5	6	9
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	92	100	88	100	50
Commended	4	5	0	15	0
Number of students tested	26	19	17	13	12
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested		1	1	1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	7	8	2	3	5
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	2	7	7	5	7
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	2	1	1	1	1
6. White					
Met Standard/Commended	98	98	79	100	74
Commended	23	20	6	15	0
Number of students tested	47	40	34	39	35
NOTES:					

12TX8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 11 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Administration Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	98	93	67	85	73
Commended	24	22	24	9	12
Number of students tested	42	27	42	34	41
Percent of total students tested	86	84	93	83	87
Number of students alternatively assessed	7	5	3	7	6
Percent of students alternatively assessed	14	16	7	17	13
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	89	47	71	55
Commended	14	11	11	0	9
Number of students tested	21	9	19	7	11
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested			1		1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested	7	2	4	4	4
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested	2	4	4	3	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested	1	1	1		
6. White					
Met Standard	97	96	64	83	71
Commended	26	24	25	7	11
Number of students tested	34	25	36	29	35
NOTES:					

12TX8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 11 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Administration Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	86	91	89	93
Commended	30	14	23	17	29
Number of students tested	44	29	43	35	41
Percent of total students tested	90	94	93	85	84
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	2	3	6	8
Percent of students alternatively assessed	10	6	7	15	16
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	80	80	100	92
Commended	24	10	0	0	8
Number of students tested	21	10	20	7	12
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested			1		1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	7	2	4	4	4
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	4	7	5	4	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	1	1	1		
6. White					
Met Standard/Commended	100	89	92	90	92
Commended	31	15	24	20	28
Number of students tested	36	27	37	30	36
NOTES:					

12TX8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 9 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Administration Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	95	82	76	62	64
Commended	35	26	18	16	18
Number of students tested	40	50	51	37	44
Percent of total students tested	93	100	96	93	92
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	0	2	1	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	7	0	4	3	8
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	96	71	71		
Commended	32	4	5		
Number of students tested	25	24	21	8	8
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested			1	2	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	8	5	8	1	6
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	3	2	6	5	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	2	2	1		3
6. White					
Met Standard/Commended	94	87	77	68	67
Commended	38	24	18	18	19
Number of students tested	32	45	39	34	36
NOTES:					

12TX8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 9 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Administration Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	97	96	92	86	82
Commended	42	49	18	27	7
Number of students tested	38	49	50	37	44
Percent of total students tested	93	100	93	93	90
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	0	2	1	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	7	0	4	3	8
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	91	85		
Commended	35	30	15		
Number of students tested	23	23	20	9	7
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested			1	1	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	8	5	8	2	5
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	3	1	6	4	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	2	2	1	1	3
6. White					
Met Standard/Commended	97	98	92	88	86
Commended	43	48	21	29	8
Number of students tested	30	44	39	34	37
NOTES:					

12TX8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	94	87	66	70	65
Commended	26	21	15	16	11
Number of students tested	135	126	130	115	126
Percent of total students tested	92	92	93	90	89
Number of students alternatively assessed	11	9	8	11	15
Percent of students alternatively assessed	7	8	6	8	10
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	97	82	59	57	51
Commended	18	5	5	10	9
Number of students tested	71	52	57	28	31
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested	0	1	3	3	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	66	71		53
Commended	22	20	14		6
Number of students tested	22	15	14	8	15
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard		45	35	23	33
Commended		0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	6	11	17	13	12
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested	5	4	3	1	4
6. White					
Met Standard	93	90	66	71	66
Commended	26	21	15	16	12
Number of students tested	112	109	109	102	105
NOTES:					

12TX8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	97	93	87	92	81
Commended	30	28	15	19	11
Number of students tested	136	129	130	116	127
Percent of total students tested	94	96	93	90	88
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	4	7	10	16
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	3	5	8	11
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	97	92	84	93	74
Commended	20	17	5	13	3
Number of students tested	70	52	57	29	31
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	0				
Commended	0				
Number of students tested	0	1	3	2	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	95	86	78		71
Commended	27	26	7		7
Number of students tested	22	15	14	9	14
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard		59	66	61	42
Commended		6	0	0	7
Number of students tested	9	15	18	13	14
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested	5	4	3	2	4
6. White					
Met Standard	98	95	87	93	84
Commended	30	29	17	21	12
Number of students tested	113	111	110	103	108
NOTES:					

12TX8